

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

241452Z Aug 00

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ2693

PAGE 01 HARARE 04692 01 OF 02 241454Z  
ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AGRE-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CEA-01	CIAE-00
	SMEC-00	CTME-00	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00
	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	EXIM-01	E-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00
	VC-00	FRB-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	ITC-01	LAB-01
	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00
	SS-00	STR-00	T-00	USIE-00	FMP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
	DRL-02	G-00	FDIC-01	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/011W	

-----7D974C 241455Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6921  
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
USDOC WASHDC  
NSC WASHDC  
DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 004692

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF, AF/S, AF/EPS, EB/IFD/ODF, EB/TPP/ODC  
TREASURY FOR ED BARBER, GRACE SONE AND HOFFMAN BARAK  
USDOC FOR 2037/ERIC HENDERSON  
STATE PASS USTR/RWHITTAKER  
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH  
LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HARARE 04692 01 OF 02 241454Z  
E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/24/05  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [PREL](#) [EAGR](#) [PINR](#) [ZI](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR CALLS ON NEW FINANCE MINISTER  
SIMBA MAKONI

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR MCDONALD, REASON 1.5 (B), (D)

1. (C) SUMMARY: THE AMBASSADOR, ECON AND NEW POL OFFICER MADE AN INTRODUCTORY CALL ON SIMBA MAKONI, THE RECENTLY APPOINTED FINANCE MINISTER ON AUGUST 22. MAKONI (WHOM THE EMBASSY KNOWS WELL) SHARED WITH US HIS DETERMINATION TO BE A FORCE FOR POSITIVE CHANGE AND PAINTED A NEW PICTURE OF THE POST-ELECTION CABINET AS A TEAM GIVEN THE BRIEF BY PRESIDENT MUGABE TO "GET ZIMBABWE WORKING AGAIN." ON THE LAND ISSUE HE TOLD US "TO ONLY BELIEVE WHAT WE SEE." THE NEW MINISTER EXPRESSED SERIOUS INTEREST IN THE STATUS AND OUTLOOK OF THE ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY ACT, AND PLEADED FOR IMMEDIATE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND CLEAR USG SUPPORT GOING AHEAD. HIS MESSAGE WAS STAND BY US, AND JUDGE ZIMBABWE ON ITS DEEDS, NOT ITS RHETORIC. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) IN AN AUGUST 22 INTRODUCTORY CALL ON NEW FINANCE MINISTER SIMBA MAKONI, ACCOMPANIED BY ECON AND POL OFFICERS, THE AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED THE TOUGH PORTFOLIO AND CHALLENGES FACING THE NEW CABINET MEMBER, AND CRITICAL ISSUES ON THE PATH AHEAD. THE COM AND OTHER SENIOR EMBASSY STAFF KNOW MAKONI WELL FROM HIS PRIOR PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS OVER THE YEARS, AND IN THE MEETING MAKONI WAS WARM AND STRAIGHTFORWARD WITH US.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HARARE 04692 01 OF 02 241454Z

-----  
THE WAY AHEAD WITH A NEW CABINET  
-----

3. (C) WHEN ASKED HOW HE VIEWED THE WAY FORWARD, MAKONI DECLARED THAT DETERMINING WHAT TO DO WAS NOT THE CHALLENGE, BUT RATHER WHEN, HOW AND WHETHER TO CARRY OUT THE HARD STEPS NECESSARY TO TURN AROUND THE DECLINE. HOW FAR TO PUSH WAS A DELICATE ISSUE, THE MINISTER TOLD US, AND HE HAD SPENT MUCH OF THE LAST FEW WEEKS (MAKONI HAD BEEN SWORN IN 4 WEEKS PRIOR TO THE DAY OF OUR CALL) BEING BRIEFED BY SENIOR MINISTRY STAFF AND LEARNING IN THE PROCESS THAT THE "JOB IS LESS ABOUT FINANCE, THAN IT IS ABOUT POLITICS." THE NEW CABINET, IN MAKONI'S VIEW, CONSTITUTES A TEAM THAT HAS BEEN TASKED BY THE PRESIDENT TO GET RESULTS. HE IS DEDICATED TO THIS GOAL, AND TOLD US THAT ZIMBABWE IS IN THE TOUGH SPOT OF NEEDING FOREIGN HELP TO GET OUT OF ITS PREDICAMENT; BUT AT THE SAME TIME HE KNEW

THAT HELP WOULD ONLY COME WHEN CLEAR PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE. "WE WILL START THE CHANGE," HE STATED, "AND YOU CAN JUDGE US BY OUR DEEDS AND NOT OUR WORDS. HOWEVER, WE NEED A SOFT BELLY TO LAND ON, AND ASK FOR ANY HELP YOU CAN PROVIDE."

14. (C) CONTINUING IN THIS SAME VEIN THE MINISTER STATED THAT THE CRITICAL ISSUE FACING THE GOVERNMENT IS TO REIN IN AND ELIMINATE LAWLESSNESS, AND THEREBY WIN BACK THE CONFIDENCE AND TRUST OF THE PEOPLE, AS WELL AS THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. ONLY IF THIS IS CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HARARE 04692 01 OF 02 241454Z  
DONE CAN NORMALCY RETURN, AND EFFORTS CAN THEN BE MADE TO STEM THE ECONOMIC DECLINE. MAKONI EMPHASIZED THAT THERE WERE NO SACRED COWS IN THIS EFFORT. THE DEVALUATION SHOWED THIS AND THE SPENDING CUTS THAT ARE TO ENSUE WILL ALSO DEMONSTRATE THIS BY DEED. MAKONI STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS FORMULATING A PLAN TO ADDRESS THE RUNAWAY INFLATION RATE, WHICH HE HOPED TO HAVE FINALIZED BEFORE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NEW BUDGET LATER THIS YEAR. HE TOLD US BLUNTLY THAT ZIMBABWE WANTED OUT OF THE CONGO, AND THE AMBASSADOR ASSURED HIM THAT THE U.S. FULLY SUPPORTED WITHDRAWAL AND WAS DOING ALL IT COULD TO ACHIEVE THIS.

-----  
THE LAND ISSUE  
-----

15. (C) THE AMBASSADOR ASKED THE NEW MINISTER IF THE GOZ WOULD GO AHEAD WITH ITS ANNOUNCED PLANS TO SEIZE 3,000 COMMERCIAL FARMS BEFORE THE START OF THE RAINY SEASON. MAKONI POINTEDLY REPLIED THAT WE SHOULD "ONLY BELIEVE WHAT YOU SEE," CLEARLY IMPLYING THAT THE SEIZURES AND RESETTLEMENT MAY WELL FALL SHORT OF THE 3,000 MARK. MAKONI FURTHER REMARKED THAT CLARITY WILL COME TO THE LAND ISSUE, AS IT IS SOMETHING ALL IN THE NATION NEED. IN A FURTHER ATTEMPT AT REASSURING US,

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ2694

PAGE 01 HARARE 04692 02 OF 02 241454Z  
ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AGRE-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CEA-01	CIAE-00
	SMEC-00	CTME-00	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00
	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	EXIM-01	E-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00
	VC-00	FRB-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	ITC-01	LAB-01
	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00
	STR-00	T-00	USIE-00	FMP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02
	G-00	FDIC-01	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/011W		

-----7D9751 241455Z /38

P 241452Z AUG 00  
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6922  
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
USDOC WASHDC  
NSC WASHDC  
DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 HARARE 004692

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF, AF/S, AF/EPS, EB/IFD/ODF, EB/TPP/ODC  
TREASURY FOR ED BARBER, GRACE SONE AND HOFFMAN BARAK  
USDOC FOR 2037/ERIC HENDERSON  
STATE PASS USTR/RWHITTAKER  
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH  
LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HARARE 04692 02 OF 02 241454Z  
E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/24/05  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [PREL](#) [EAGR](#) [PINR](#) [ZI](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR CALLS ON NEW FINANCE MINISTER  
SIMBA MAKONI

MAKONI AGAIN EMPHASIZED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S BRIEF TO BOTH HIM AND THE ENTIRE CABINET WAS TO "GET ZIMBABWE WORKING AGAIN." "IF I CANNOT DO THAT JOB, I WILL NOT BLAME IT ON THE PRESIDENT, BECAUSE IT WILL BE MY FAULT OR THE FAULT OF THE TEAM," HE PASSIONATELY STATED. "WE WILL SINK OR SWIM TOGETHER, AND I THINK THIS IS STARTING TO BE REALIZED," MAKONI ASSURED US.

16. (C) IN CLOSING, THE MINISTER ASKED US WITH NOTABLE CONCERN ABOUT THE STATUS, IMPACT AND OUTLOOK FOR THE ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY ACT. THE AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED OUR

PRESENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, AND PROVIDED AN ASSESSMENT OF WHAT ACTION COULD TAKE PLACE, HOW AND WHY. HE STATED THAT THE EMBASSY SHARED CONGRESS' CONCERN ABOUT THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN ZIMBABWE. WE EXPLAINED TO THE FINANCE MINISTER THE KEY ROLE THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S UPCOMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON COULD PLAY, AND INFORMED HIM THAT WE WERE WILLING TO BRIEF THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER GOZ OFFICIALS BEFORE THEIR TRIP. IN HIS FINAL WORDS THE NEW FINANCE CHIEF ASKED IF THERE WAS ANY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THE UNITED STATES COULD PROVIDE ZIMBABWE TO HELP IT THROUGH ITS PRESENT DIFFICULT TIMES. FOREIGN EXCHANGE IS SO SHORT, HE EXPLAINED, THAT IT IS A STRUGGLE TO EVEN COME UP WITH USD 2 MILLION TO GET SMALL AMOUNTS OF FUEL IMPORTED. ANYTHING WE COULD PROVIDE "THAT'S NOT  
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HARARE 04692 02 OF 02 241454Z  
TIED TO THE BIG PICTURE" WOULD BE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED. THE AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED THE NATURE, AMOUNTS AND LIMITS ON OUR AID TO ZIMBABWE AND LET THE NEW MINISTER DOWN GENTLY.

-----  
COMMENT  
-----

17. (C) THOUGH WE KNOW MAKONI FAIRLY WELL, THIS INITIAL MEETING IN HIS NEW OFFICES WAS DIFFERENT THAN OUR PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS WHEN HE WAS BUSINESSMAN BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANT POST THE MINISTER HOLDS. WHILE MAKONI WAS SCANT ON DETAILS OF THE MINISTRY'S POLICIES GOING FORWARD (A FAULT SHARED BY THE MILLENNIUM ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN), HE WAS HONEST, LISTENED CAREFULLY AND MADE HIS PITCH FOR ZIMBABWE WITHOUT SUSPENDING CRITICISM OR IGNORING REALITY. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HIM AND HOPE THAT HIS WORDS AND VISION ARE MADE REAL. THE EMBASSY DOES WANT TO HELP THIS MINISTER. END COMMENT.

MCDONALD

CONFIDENTIAL

>